

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-14. (Cancelled)

1 15. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as recited in claim 33 wherein said coating
2 aids in retaining said stent in a body lumen until degradation of said coating.

16-27. (Cancelled)

1 28. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as recited in Claim 33 wherein said stent
2 includes a portion constructed from super elastic material.

29-32. (Cancelled)

1 33. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for maintaining a body lumen opening
2 comprising a stent with a distal end and a proximal end, said stent having a tubular shaped body
3 wall with a linear central axis when said stent is in a relaxed state, wherein (a) said body wall has
4 outer and inner diameters which flare outward at the distal end and the proximal end of said
5 stent, and wherein said diameters increase to form a bulbous middle section of said stent for the
6 purpose of providing resistance with a lumen wall upon installation of said stent in said lumen,
7 (b) said stent [is] includes a base structure constructed of a non-biodegradable material that is
8 collapsible to facilitate insertion in said lumen and is expandable after placement in said lumen,
9 and (c) the exterior surface of said [stent includes] base has a biodegradable or bioabsorbable
10 coating thereon, [whereby] providing that after a determined period of time biodegradation or
11 absorption of said coating reduces the diameter of said stent by an amount sufficient to facilitate
12 removal of said stent.

34. (Cancelled)